

IN THE ABSTRACT

Please substitute the following Abstract for the Abstract originally contained in the application.

**Abstract of the Disclosure**

A stochastic codebook associates a pulse position of a predetermined channel with a pulse position of another channel, searches for a pulse position by means of a predetermined algorithm, and outputs a code combining a found pulse position with a polarity code to an excitation vector creation section as a stochastic excitation vector code. By this means, it is possible to secure variations so that there are no positions where there is no pulse at all while achieving a reduction of the number of bits used when coding stochastic codebook pulses in order to attain a lower bit rate.